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NATIVE BARDS;

A

Satirical Effusion:

WITH

Other Occasional Pieces.

BY

J. L. M.

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TO

ROBERT T. DUNBAR,

PLANTER,

OF

NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI,

THIS UNWORTHY TOKEN OF THE AUTHOR'S
ATTACHMENT AND REGARD

IS

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

In exposing this little work to the general eye, I would take the liberty to remark, that it is not the production of an author by profession, and that its contents, with the exception, perhaps, of one piece, were not originally written with a view to publication. It is composed almost entirely of the literary recreations which have from time to time beguiled the ruggedness of an arduous study, and soothed the asperities of a toilsome and eventful youth. This explanation, if it obtain not the indulgence of the critic, will at least satisfactorily explain the many defects, which will doubtless offend the eye of the intelligent reader. Perhaps I ought to apologize for the acrimonious warmth which characterizes the first piece, a feeling from which I could not defend myself, when I beheld the degrading spectacle which our poetical literature presents to the mor-

tified American and sneering foreigner.* It may be found also that I have dwelt with too much detail upon the coxcombry of manner, affected by our aspirants for the bays; but as it has often filled me with unutterable disgust, I really could not permit the opportunity to escape me, of exposing some of its ludicrous and offensive peculiarities. A similar feeling led me into the digression, at the expense of the unity of my plan, in which I have attempted to cast ridicule upon the *furomania* (pardon the etymology) which disgraces the taste of the day, and which I cannot help likening to the rage for melodramatic spectacle, which has superseded the more legitimate and intellectual entertainments of the stage. The liberty which I have taken will surprize less, when I declare, that the work in which it occurs was commenced without any regular design or preconceived plan, so that it grew to its present size and shape, as it were, spontaneously, and to the ex-

* A friend dissenting from the indiscriminate censure conveyed in this paragraph, asked whether I had read Mr. Bryant's Thanatopsis. It is with great pleasure I declare my sincere admiration for that production, which evinces no common share of poetical talent and feeling.

clusion of several topics, which I had vaguely in contemplation when I set out.

With regard to the characters, or to speak more correctly, specimens of characters, which I have introduced, I would merely observe that they are rather sketches than portraits, and should with one or two exceptions, be considered rather as individuals representing classes, than accurate representations of distinct personages. I will not pretend to conceal, however, that while drawing each portrait, I had some individual in view, although I may have merged his personal characteristics in a more general and comprehensive form. I should have multiplied these specimens, (no difficult effort) had not the task been ungrateful to my nature, and revolting to my feelings. I must not forget to ask pardon of the ladies, for some good humoured raillery, in which I have indulged, and beg them not to consider these sportive sallies as intended to be offensive.*—*Sed manum de tabulâ.*

The other pieces contained in this little volume, were written at various periods, generally upon the

* Oh! for a fine thief, of the age of two and twenty, or thereabouts!—*Falstaff.*

spur of the occasion, and must be regarded, whatever may be their defects or merits in other respects, as, at least, strongly expressive of the feelings or circumstances under the influence of which they were produced.

In conclusion, I do not hesitate to admit, in appearing for the first time before the public, that I feel no small degree of anxiety about the reception of my "virgin muse," whose shrinking timidity did not very readily yield to the persuasions, which finally induced her to expose herself to the general gaze. But this is the old pretence:—"Oblig'd by hunger and request of friends." I have often envied, though I can by no means lay claim to, the philosophic spirit of the author, who, when told that the public had damned his play, very coolly replied, that he would take the liberty of returning the compliment.

NATIVE BARDS,

A

SATIRICAL EFFUSION.

I cannot but think it the most reasonable thing in the world to distinguish good writers by discouraging the bad. Nor is it an ill natured thing to the very persons upon whom the reflections are made. It is true it may deprive them a little the sooner of a short profit and a transitory reputation, but then it may have a good effect and oblige them (before it be too late), to decline that for which they are so very unfit, and to have recourse to something in which they may be more successful.

Dennis' Remarks on Prince Arthur.

NATIVE BARDS.

Curs'd be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,
That tends to make one worthy man my foe,
Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,
Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear.

* * * * *

A lash like mine no honest man shall dread,
But all such babbling blockheads in his stead.

POPE, *Epilogue to the Satires.*

Each songster, riddler, ev'ry nameless name,
All crowd, who foremost shall be damn'd to fame.

Ibid. Dunciad.

The lash of satire and the sting of song,
Have oft reclaim'd or sham'd at least the throng,
Who virtue's noble dictates have forsworn,
Or laugh'd religion's sacred law to scorn;
Whose callous souls from honor long estrang'd,
By love unmelted, as by fear unchang'd,
Nor earthly pains, nor dread of death can shake,
Or bid the stony, sleeping conscience wake.
Strange, that who heeds not pow'r's uplifted rod,
Nor trembles at the anger of his God,
Who justice mocks, and judgment holds a jest,
Nor feels the vulture preying in his breast,
Before the poet's feeble breath should quail,
And bide the biddings of a thing so frail.

But thus it is ; the arm of wit can strike
The boldly wicked through his shield of might,
Can pluck the mask that hides his guilty face,
Or gilds it with a meretricious grace,
Hold forth to hissing scorn the villain's name,
And far and wide his infamy proclaim,
Blasted and blacken'd all, by satire's scorching flame.
My scope is not so high, nor trust so great,
To abler hands I leave a task whose weight
Mine cannot wield, folly I make my game,
And wing my shafts with a less noble aim.
What rod, I ask then, to chastise the fool
Can match with thine, resistless ridicule ?
What weapon, keen or piercing, can arrest
The monster's progress like a scornful jest ?
Whose pow'r the rich, the proud, the mighty own,
And coxcombs, male or female, curse and groan.
Spirit of Pope ! Oh ! might I catch a spark
Of thine immortal flame, amid the dark
In which I dwell, and at thy living fire
Kindle my glowing breast's indignant ire ;
Might I but learn the secret of that art
Whose withering strength, and ever during smart,
Fierce Dennis, drivelling Tibbalds, Blackmore felt,
Which wheresoe'er it turn'd, destruction dealt
On fools and flatterers, with their beastly train,
I would not fear to wield my pen in vain ;
A second Dunciad should appear and sweep
Alcides like, the Augean stable's heap,

Clean out the filthy purlieus that disgrace
Our mental realm, that every spot deface,
And far and near the grovelling tenants chace.
But ah! Elijah mounting to the skies,
Bears too his mantle from earth's longing eyes,
Though many seek the sacred skirt to snatch,
And with his robe, the prophet's spirit catch,
Nor vice and folly shall again regard
A foe to match with Twickenham's honor'd bard.
Obscure, and weak in health and mind, with dread,
And trembling awe, I in his footsteps tread,
Since none can now be found to wield the blade
Which arm'd his hand, and ev'ry fool dismay'd;
Yet though I shrink before his towering crest
His proud example stimulates my breast.
'Tis not the will I want, had I the pow'r
To crush these puny creatures of an hour,
These shameless scribblers that disgrace our name,
And stain and soil the escutcheon of our fame,
The great five hundred poets that abound
Like mushrooms in the dunghill's steaming ground,
The countless authors that in ev'ry town
And village bounds, a nuisance foul have grown,
The piddling poetasters, scrawling scribes,
Who spread throughout the land in myriad tribes
That burst in darkening swarms and creep or fly
Like locust bands beclouding Afric's sky;
Oh were the pow'r but mine, as is the will,
To save our realm from this wide spreading ill,

To crush the hydra headed monster's sway
And brush his filthy progeny away,
Arm'd with a "whip of scorpions" in my hand,
From this rapacious brood I'd free the groaning land.
I love my country, bless my native soil,
The son of one who strove midst blood and toil,
Long strove, and suffer'd much, with dauntless breast,
To plant young freedom's empire in the West;
I would not sit with patient soul and hear
Her name revil'd, nor lend a tranquil ear
To story of her wrongs which should be mine,
Nor patriot worships at a purer shrine.
How oft when wandering on some distant strand,
Tow'rd my far home my spirit would expand,
And sweet the memory come of my lov'd parent land.
But jealous of her glory and her fame,
It grieves me much and fills my soul with shame,
To view the foul disease, the loathsome pest,
That stains her brow and riots in her breast,
To mark these vile pretenders to the muse
On ev'ry side their myriad swarms diffuse,
(1)Thick as the countless, formless things which stir,
Nor dead, nor living, in Nile's fetid mire,
That crawl and wallow in the muck and slime
Which Egypt's shores with pregnant filth begrime,
Rot ere they live, corrupt before they die,
(2)"Till the land stinks so num'rous is the fry."
In the proud days of England's monarch Anne,
In Grub-street's famous precincts liv'd a clan
Of hungry, starveling bards who rav'd and wrote
With furious ardor, and discordant note,

By famine urg'd, and cold, ill cloth'd, ill fed,
Bartering their products coarse, for coarser bread ;
Want was their muse, starvation their defence,
Clamouring like beggars for their paltry pence.
But happy England then with pride could boast
Of glorious spirits an unrivall'd host,
(3)Great Dryden, matchless Pope, chaste Addison,
Swift, Prior, Garth and Gay, with more who shone
The brilliant constellations of an age
Yet unsurpass'd in history's ample page.
Our mighty Grub-street, far and wide extends,
From East to West, from North to South, nor ends
But with our shores, and have we ought to make
amends ?
Would I could show each prostituted name,
Like Cromwell's "damn'd to everlasting fame,"
Would that each desperate rhymster I might give
To infamy, in verse that should outlive
The transient epoch which his works deface,
And hold him up in eloquent disgrace,
A warning wide, an object for the scorn
Of distant realms and ages yet unborn,
To vindicate with after times the land
Which gave me birth, from this polluting brand.
Vain hope in one to fame as little born
As those he rails at with indignant scorn,
Obscure, unknown, whose wish, abhorring strife,
Is but to steal with tranquil pace through life,
Himself perhaps as worthy of the blame
As those his angry verse upholds to shame;

Prone to dislike, and eager to condemn,
Does he not act what he disdains in them?
Well, be it so—I speak not truth the less,
E'en though my own transgressions I confess,
And like the parson say to those who chide,
"Friends do not as I do, but as I bid;"
Surely he gives a proof of candour rare,
A proof sincere, who scorns himself to spare,
And of the blame he deals, accepts his share.
Yet am I not of that low, grovelling crew,
(Call this pride, vanity, 'tis not less true,)
That shameless, heartless, despicable race
Of scriblers who the name of bard disgrace
(That sacred title, that illustrious name
Of bard and prophet, which was once the same,)
By paltry trick, vile arts, and base intrigue,
Who cling together in dishonest league,
And earn by petty management the fame
They know full well their merits cannot claim,
By treachery scale Parnassus' airy mount,
And dabbling soil the pure Castalian fount,
Pollute with sacrilege the holy shrine
Of Phœbus, and degrade the sacred nine.
No! God be prais'd! I have not made the muse
A prostitute to such debasing use,
I have not sought her face, nor won the smile
Of the chaste nymph, for purposes so vile;
Ah! no! the Aonian maid to me hath been
As a fond sister to console, and wean
My wearied spirit from the sordid strife
Of earth, and sickening cares of life,

To scatter flowers on my thorny path
And melt my anxious soul from pain or wrath;
Her gentle tone hath lull'd the torturing jar
Of passion, and subdued the bosom's war,
Her sweet, angelic voice oft sooth'd my heart,
And still compos'd my breast with its bewitching art.
Calm, I have kept the tenour of my way,
Nor from the common track have long'd to stray,
Content to seek for happiness at home,
For bliss, in mine own breast, nor elsewhere roam.
I never strove for fame nor courted praise,
My quest hath been for hearts-ease, not for bays;
The laurel wreath, the palm, I have not sought,
Nor vain applause, nor empty breath have bought,
At the dear sacrifice of precious ease,
The price which men must pay to shine or please.
No more of this, it is a task ingrate
Of self, or good, or ill, though due, to prate;
With eager ardour I retrace my track,
Impatient to hunt down the clamorous pack
Of scribes and scribblers whose tumultuous throng
Counts like young David its ten thousand strong;(4)
From the four corners of the wind they crowd,
A host unnumber'd, busy, boist'rous, loud,
And spread throughout our borders from the shore
Which echoes back the vast Atlantic's roar,
To where the ocean waves of Mississippi pour.
And first, ye Yankee Byrons, take your part,
Ye mimic Harolds, feel the well earn'd smart,
Ye, whose wild strains, and dark, defying air,
Would ape the thrilling songster of despair;

Ye merchant Corsairs, legal Laras, lend
An ear attentive, to a candid friend,
Who kindly would your erring steps reclaim,
And save yourselves and native soil much shame—
Why will ye seek, aspiring, to attain
The lordly poet's dark, Promethean strain?
Why emulate by your low, grovelling flight
The monarch eagle's proud career of light,
And seek to track his journey toward that sun,
Whose blaze your feeble glance must ever shun?
'Tis not by shaving of your brows, nor hair
Whose streaming locks, like those of meteors, flare
Upon the wind, nor cloak whose gloomy fold
Defends not yet the naked neck from cold;
'Tis not by wandering with a low'ring brow
Compos'd in all the tragic lines of woe,
Nor walking among men as in a cloud,
With a stern visage, and an aspect proud;
'Tis not, I say, by all this nauseous trick,
These madcap airs that speak the lunatic,
Which can deceive some foolish girl at most
Who deems she sees terrific Lara's ghost,
And then exclaims with a most flattering awe,
"How much like Byron! Mr. Simpkins! la!"
That you can hope, dull souls, to emulate
The bard of sadness, dark and desolate,
Or in your misty, frothy strains, infuse
The spirit of his wild, romantic muse.
The outward form cannot the mind avail,
And if it did, e'en there you sadly fail,

You cannot wholly play the part you take,
Your vulgar nature will oft times out break,
The pedlar and the prince can ne'er agree,
Nor base born coarseness, with true majesty.
Go, then, and with a grateful heart to God,
Devour each day your pudding and your cod,
Comfort yourselves with flaggons, courage! cheer
Your maudlin spirits with besotting beer,
Go, plough your fields, teach hopeful youth, engross,
Plant onions, notions vend, for gold sell dross,
Vote, muster, edit journals, import tea,
Make (5) Goshen cheeses, wretched rum for sea,
Bad cloths, and flimsy fabrics for the mart!
Of the poor south, that still must pay and smart;
But sport not antics on the awful grave
Of him alas! whom genius could not save.
Illustrious Harold! in these lines be paid
A trembling tribute to thy mighty shade;
I cannot coldly speak thy name, but feel
A solemn fervour through my bosom steal,
As I recall thine image dark and sad,
By clouds encompass'd, and in tempests clad;
Thy course was short, thy flight though proud and high,
Glanced like a meteor through the frighted sky;
Born to astonish man's admiring sight,
And sacrifice thyself for earth's delight,
The ardent flame which burn'd within thy breast,
Though bright, to thee became the torture of unrest.
Thou wert not made for happiness below,
This world could not assuage thy spirit's glow,

Being of nobler clay, nor earth's low clime
Suffice thy soul, or slake the thirst sublime
Which long'd for higher joys, and prouder scope,
With a deep yearning, and a quenchless hope.
Thy faults were many and thou oft didst err,
I cannot prove thy memory's flatterer,
Yet like the angel with a pitying tear,
I'd blot the stains which sully thy career,
Nor mark as on the radiant orb I gaze,
The cloudy specks that dim his dazzling blaze.
What'er thy life, how noble was thy death!
Martyr to freedom, Greece, thou pour'dst thy breath,
And didst to after times a glorious name bequeath.
But hadst thou known to what thy fame would come,
Thy muse had ceased to sing, thy voice been dumb,
Its degradation would have brought a tear
To thy proud eye, and forc'd a withering sneer;
To mark thy name with stupid ignorance
Become the excuse for all extravagance;
To view thyself the example and pretence
Of ev'ry rhymster against common sense,
Who thinks it argues genius to seem sad,
And deems, the fool, a poet should be mad.
There's not a beardless boy that's "mad or vain,"
Who does not emulate thy lofty strain,
Not one poor devil author, starveling scribe,
But who pretends thy spirit to imbibe,
Nor doggrel scribbler for the weekly press,
Thy widow'd muse who lusts not to caress.
They write, they rave, they rant, on ev'ry side,
And pour their musings in a whelming tide

Of sighs, and sobs, and snivelling whimpers, till
Rivers of mingled tears and ink they spill.
All, all, lift up to thee their dazzled eyes,
Tir'd of low earth, they rush into the skies,
And spite of reason, nature, fate, would Byronize. (6)
But who is he that meets my fancy's eye
With face fanatic lifted up on high,
Who seems to scorn the company of men
As all unworthy of his lofty ken,
And like a being of superior birth
Would even spurn his common mother earth?
Some mighty genius sure, or bedlamite,
For now the difference has become but slight,
And madness is to poetry allied
So near, 'tis hard between them to decide.
Thus when the maid whose soul Apollo fir'd,
To know the future, and declare, inspir'd,
With trembling awe ascended the tripod,
And felt within her breast, the striving God,
Her eyeballs glar'd, her rigid hair upstood,
Fear shook her limbs, and horror froze her blood,
The holy rage so rack'd her tossing frame,
A maniac fury, seem'd the sacred flame.
Say, who is he, again I ask, whose air
So melo-dramatic, portends despair,
Who seems to labour 'neath the stern controul
Of a poetic agony of soul,
And wrestle with a fiend as wild he goes,
With inward strivings, and convulsive throes?

You take him for some genius proud, sublime,
A master spirit of his land and time,
One of those souls an age doth oft refuse,
A miracle of mind, pride of the muse,
The very moisture on his brow, Castalian dews.
How sad is your mistake, though such he deems
Himself, amid his vapoury dreams,
And lives, he says, contented and alone,
In a vast, wild creation of his own,
(A sort of vague, poetic cant, I fear,
To others, as to me, not very clear.)
He is indeed, the wonder of his set,
His own devoted, scribbling cabinet,
Compos'd of those who have, or would set up
With his good word a literary shop;
Who take him for their model and their type,
And far and near his nauseous praises pipe.
Talk not to them of Dryden, Pope, or Gay,
"Yes, those were pretty poets in their day,
"They versified with spirit and with ease
"And even now indeed may sometimes please,"
Shrugging their shoulders they reply and sneer,
"But then they feeling, fancy, lack'd, while here
"In this great bard these noble traits combine
"With ev'ry talent, human or divine.
"The system has quite chang'd you needs must know,
"And what was good of old is not so now;
"We have obtain'd in poetry new light,
"That shines abroad so gloriously bright,"
(Its ardent votaries are dazzled quite.)

Magnus Apollo, shines in ev'ry sheet,
With honours heap'd so thickly and so sweet,
They absolutely cloy, nay worse, pollute,
Like perfumes plaster'd on a prostitute.
We have descriptions of his face and mien,
His lofty forehead, and his visage lean,
His fine poetic eye, his noble air,
So grand, one scarce from worship can forbear.
Ah! learn one sober truth, however sad,
This,—your mad poets, friend, are also bad,
And genius does not signify the want
Of common sense, despite the age's cant;
A vain idea, a pernicious rule,
That ofttimes makes a madman of a fool,
And sends to Bedlam, or consigns to shame,
More souls than any folly I can name.
Believe me, friend, it will not long suffice
To *look* the poet only, and *seem* wise;
This vulgar clap trap, these low, stage trick arts,
Wild glances, solemn airs, and sudden starts,
Cannot of genuine merit take the place,
But bring at last exposure and disgrace.
This fate I've known an actor fam'd befall,
Whose talent was to rave, to rant, and bawl,
Whose power was muscle, and whose passion lung,
Whose high wrought efforts not from genius sprung;
Though long he held the scene, and taste defied,
And look'd on all with an oppressive pride,
His arts expos'd at length, he sank in shame,
And fell, to rise no more, with blasted fame.

I fear I've grown ill natur'd, splenetic,
Of sentimental cut throats I'm quite sick,
(Alas! that I should have so little taste
Nor join my suffrage with an age so chaste,)
Corsairs by sea, and cut-purses by land,
That board your ships, or boldly bid you stand,
Or pick your pockets clean, or rob in alleys,
The heroes of the gallows, or the galleys;
Fine fellows, noble blades, upon my word,
So well they wield a cutlass or a sword,
Their forms so sturdy, and their eye so keen,
So bold their port, so chivalrous their mien.
But how they always have, is vastly queer,
Cutthroat, or cutpurse, thief, or buccaneer,
Some fond, romantic maid, those men of blood,
To soothe their leisure, and to cook their food,
To drop a tear when they prepare to roam,
And with a kiss and comfort, welcome home,
Supply them with clean linen, sweet and fair,
And wash the blood that's clotted in their hair,
Nurse them when sick, their spirits animate
When brandy fails, and cheer their lonely state,
I wish, egad, I was so fortunate.
These gentry too are always so divine,
The very cream of ev'ry thing that's fine,
And talk so interestingly of love,
And sentiment and soul, it needs must move,
Of justice, honour, mercy, and all that,
That common virtue seems to theirs quite flat,
And one would almost draw the inference sad,
True goodness harbours only with the bad.

But is it not a little strange, the taste
Of those fair maidens, modest, pure and chaste
To dwell with "minions of the moon," and men
Who rove the seas or haunt some gloomy den,
Whose hands are stain'd with blood, who steal from all,
An honest trade they primitive justice call,
And only seek, kind souls, to equalize
The rights of nature, which with zeal they prize;
Thus, *meum, tuum,* o'er their ill got wine,
They reason quite away with logic fine.
I am not quite a coward, though not brave,
Yet dread the sight of bandit or of knave,
Rhinaldo Rhinaldini, Captain Kidd
Have oft in dreams my panting breast bestrid,
And when I roam o'er fell, or sail o'er flood,
I pray to meet them not by sea or wood,
And think, were I a maid, I'd rather flee,
Than trust my honour in such company.
Poor souls! with hunger too, they oft must pine,
Have no fix'd hour at which they daily dine,
Or what is worse, drink tea, dear, gentle sinners!
Because their lovers first must steal their dinners,
And many little female comforts miss,
So necessary to domestic bliss.
But 'tis no easy task to comprehend
The sex, and find out where their fancies tend;
Perhaps their ardent souls prefer a life
Replete with changes, with adventures rife,

Pleasures the humdrum business cannot give,
Of the dull scenes in which alas ! we live.
Women we know and read it in their glance,
Have ever been the lovers of romance,
A kindred flame is all that they require,
Seek only passion's warm and mutual fire,
Without which, in their eyes, a saint's a devil,
And with it fiends not altogether evil.
These heroes fierce their bosoms so entrance,
That now an honest man has scarce a chance,
They deem a sober citizen a bore,
Fellows that never dipt their hands in gore,
Know nothing of romance, adventures bold,
Lack spirit, made of base born mould.
So anxious am I to deserve their grace,
I'm sometimes tempted to adorn my face
With fierce mustachios and then sally out,
And sweep the seas, or in the forests scout,
Arm'd with a trusty cutlass, glorious blade !
To earn my bread, and win some gentle maid ;
Blackburn himself my prowess should out brave,
But then, alas ! I have a soul to save.
Doubtless some homespun epic will appear,
Whose hero is a roving buccaneer,
Perhaps that canting rogue so lately hung,
The pirate Gibbs, shall by some bard be sung,
I think his story could not fail to please,
Some Homer, sing the Achilles of the seas,
And let not Lethe's sullen billows hide
The prince of Corsairs and his lovely bride.

We're not content the glories to declare
Of this heroic race, but ape their air,
And high and low, in ev'ry grade, and place,
Copy their manners too with vile grimace.
To buy a glove into a shop I peep,
Straightway fierce Conrads from the counter leap,
And haughtily demand the price, good lord!
As if they meant to back it with the sword;
And when I lose my beard, I'm in the pow'r
Of a drawn weapon wielded by a Giaour.
A tailor is but half a man 'tis said,
You'd take mine for stern Alp the renegade,
So proud, so fierce, so desperate, he scowls,
And if his bill's not paid, terrific growls;
I have a Tomlinson to clean my shoes,
And six Paul Cliffords where I read the news.
—Oh! when shall song and sense again unite,
And each by mutual lustre shine more bright?
When shall the judgment and the heart agree,
And sober reason sanction their decree?
Though verse should chiefly please the charmed sense,
It need not give the cooler head offence,
Nor tinkling syllables delight the ear
Alone, but also court the taste severe.
Imagination should not spurn the rein
Of judgment, nature, and their laws disdain,
Nor fancy riot heedless of controul,
And scorn the dictates of the chasten'd soul.

Give me the line that speaks unto the heart,
Delights the fancy with seductive art,
And yet where reason, nature, taste, may find their part.
And thou too, Moore, the bard of wine and love,
Soft, amorous, as the cooings of a dove,
Britain's Anacreon, and Catullus too,
Whose rich voluptuous strains the spirit woo
With every perfume of the odorous East,
Cull'd for thy luscious, epicurean feast;
Thou too, accept my pity, hast a score
Of ardent neophytes on this far shore,
Score, did I say? the list cannot be told,
So vast its length, their names so manifold.
One celebrates in mawkish verse or prose,
The novel themes, a rainbow or a rose,
And finds in ev'ry flow'r, and leaf, and blade,
Materials for his low, poetic trade.
Ceaseless he drivels forth his ideot strains,
The milk-sop drippings of his sickly brains,
The wishy washy weepings of a muse
That feeds on sickening froth and stale refuse;
Puling and whimpering, like a love sick girl,
Of winds that murmur, and of streams that purl,
Of summer clouds, that sail athwart the heaven,
And stars that never fail to shine at even,
He vents his namby pamby ditties, trash,
His snivelling, sentimental balderdash,
The nauseous rinsings of a cup of tea,
Which he would fain dole out for poesy.

Another not content to stay at home,
And sing, and scribble, must in fancy roam
To the far shores of sacred Palestine ;
Not to prostrate at Jesus' holy shrine,
Or like the fam'd crusaders of old time,
Peril his safety for a hope sublime ;
But with a vulgar itching to deface
The Hebrew annals of their antique grace,
In barely tolerable song relate
Of ancient Solyma, the tearful fate,
Her deeds embellish, and her tale rehearse,
In humdrum stanzas, and just so so verse,
As if he fondly hop'd, vain man, to mend
The word of God, and Deity transcend.
A third, the duties of a shop attends,
And now his spirit with the muse unbends,
A yard of tape now higgling sells, and then
Delights his fancy with his procreant pen,
One moment vends a pin, the next,
Unmov'd by calls, by customers unvext,
Indites a stanza or a lyric spins,
And canting doggrel with his trade combines.
How enviable is his happy vein,
Which nought disturbs, how eloquent the strain
Which smells both of Parnassus and the shop,
And breathes such evangelic faith and hope,
Twould lift our ardent longings to the skies,
Did we not dream of fall of stocks, and rise,
And think we saw the spirit of Cheapside
Glow in his verse and o'er his lines preside.

But am I mad? this bard so godly, pure,
Ranks not, I ask his pardon, with Tom Moore.
Mark that poor devil with the rusty coat,
And bristling beard, his dolorous phiz but note,
Say, is he not, so shabby and unshorn,
So sad, so sentimental, so forlorn,
A rich example of the poet's fate,
A living, walking libel on the state
That lets him starve, nor blushes to refuse
A crumb of bread, to his pale, tatter'd muse?
Methinks I see, ah! melancholy sight!
A shred protrude, nor black, alas, nor white,
From the worn elbow, lo! another there!
My modest muse, chaste nymph, will not say where;
With piteous tears, my melting eyes flow o'er,
Behold a third! a fourth! I'll see no more!
The dangling skirt in vain would seek to hide
These moving, meek appeals to sordid pride,
For alms he scorns the passers to assail,
But bears a mute petition at his tail.
Yet poverty cannot depress his soul,
Nor haggard want his feelings proud controul,
He feels that he was born to write and sing,
To mount aloft on fancy's soaring wing,
On wild imagination's pinions rise,
And sail sublime, a denizen of the skies.
What cares he then for comforts gross below,
For joys, or pains, he scorns, too proud, to know?
Camelion like he'd rather feed on air,
Or run a naked savage, than forbear

His lofty spirit's wants to satisfy,
And drink in living streams of poesy,
Or rather pour them forth, for poets still
Would rather give than take, so free their will.
To him the joys of verse are meat and drink,
Food, clothing, ev'ry thing, he finds in ink,
And wifeless, childless, he would rather chuse,
So pure his taste, a mistress in the muse.
His whole existence is a life of song,
To Phœbus all the moments fleet belong,
No matter what the subject, or the lay,
Which he assumes for fame, or paltry pay,
He turns to verse all things that fall into his way.
This day he pens an ode unto the sun,
The morrow to escape an odious dun,
Proclaims at large with his notorious quill,
His clamorous tailor's unexampled skill,
Now celebrates the radiant stars, and now,
The lottery on which they smile below,
Or writes a sonnet on a lady 's eyes,
Or patent blacking's merit magnifies.
Observe that strolling poetaster go,
An ambulating bard, a public show,
The maudlin satellite of wretched song,
The stupid wonder of an ideot throng,
The muse's vagabond, Apollo's jest,
A nation's nuisance and a public pest,
The votary of Bacchus and the nine,
The Anacreon of bad brandy and worse wine,
Poetic pedlar, who retails his wares,
As others theirs, at public shows and fairs,

And scatters far and near his nauseous strain,
From East to West, from Florida to Maine.
See him, besotted, desperately scrawl
With an old tavern quill upon the wall,
His drunken stanzas and his beastly strains,
The foul outpourings of his reeking brains;
See him, vile spectacle! gulp forth each time
A filthy stream of mingled beer and rhyme,
While at each loathsome, eructating pause
The gaping listeners hiccup their applause,
And laud his reeling rantings to the skies,
While gin and gratitude pour from his eyes.
He too is one of that illustrious band,
The famous songsters of our favour'd land;
Nay! start not, nor his well known merits slight,
Has he not with the rest an equal right
To fame? can he not boast a name?
What more, I ask and blush, can others claim?
Where shall I find the talent and the time
To celebrate each noted son of rhyme,
Each *real* poet, mighty man of verse,
His glory sing, his merits vast rehearse?
This noble duty I must needs postpone,
And trust their fortune to their works alone;
Since, justice did I wish to do, and fill
The growing canvass, empty were the will:
For each vile journal, paltry magazine,
Of weekly, monthly date, each sheet unclean
Of reeking folds, each dirty, low gazette
Throughout the land, can boast its famous set

Of bards for hire or fame, its long array,
Sullen or sprightly, wo-begone or gay,
Of Mortimers, Almanzors, Lauras, met
With ev'ry letter of the alphabet,
Eager to see their pseudo names in print,
And far too vain to spare a gentle hint,
By which the ladies and the world may know
The genius whence such matchless numbers flow.
The lust of scribbling now inflames each breast,
And song, alas! becomes a public pest,
(Blest art! of old to wondering mortals giv'n
To soothe the breast, and lift the soul to heav'n)
An epidemic ill, a furious rage,
Bane of the time, and torment of the age,
Which groans beneath th' oppressive weight of verse;
Phœbus, incens'd, again inflicts his curse,
As when among the Grecian hosts he shed
His wrath to avenge Chryseis captive led.
God of the silver bow, ah! hear our moan!
Remit thy rage, Latona's direful son!
Recall thy fatal shafts, and send a cure
To cleanse our breasts from this disease impure,
This leprous pest that spreads on ev'ry hand,
This vile infection that corrupts the land.
I've somewhere read, I think it was in France,
A furious mania seiz'd on all, to dance;
They caper'd through the crowded streets like mad,
The old, the young, the cheerful, and the sad;
Bishops were seen to trip it merrily,
And priests and Cyprians join with equal glee.

Cowl'd monks and veiled nuns rebounding jump,
And meagre anchorites with abbots plump ;
Not to describe the party-colour'd throng
Of soldiers, citizens, who frisk'd along,
With nobles, beggars, princes, pedlars, all,
(As oft I've witness'd at a masquerade ball,)
Ladies of rank with common trulls, a troop
Grotesque, now here, now there, now down, now up.
At length a hoary priest, whose pious soul
Was scandaliz'd by this adventure droll,
First at the Virgin's shrine a vow address'd,
That she would deign to give their members rest,
And then by exorcisms the charm effac'd,
And from their limbs the jolly demon chac'd :
The fury ceas'd, the dancers made a halt,
And pray'rs were offer'd for the general fault.
Oh, might some exorcism or holy charm
Each scribbling member of its rage disarm,
Relieve our fingers, as the feet of those
Who furious leapt on saltatory toes.
And you, ye fair, ah ! you are much to blame,
You too contribute to the public shame,
By lauding each low effort of the muse,
Which taste should teach not even to peruse.
Why will you ope your albums to the strains
Of ev'ry coxcomb bard who sense disdains,
And make yourselves recipients of the trash
Of ev'ry fool whom shame cannot abash ?
You know right well, in all things that men do,
They chiefly look for their reward to you,

And search within the circles of your eyes
The blame they dread, or the applause they prize:
Woman, sweet woman, is the end and scope
Of all we hazard and of all we hope,
The source of ev'ry joy and ev'ry tear,
For whom we fight, write, sing, or suffer, here,
The heav'n or hell of man, when gentle or severe.
Why lend yourselves, I ask then, to deface
Your country's glory and your nation's grace,
And give your "most sweet voices" to the host
Of babbling bards, to shame and reason lost?
Look rather down with disapproving brow
On each poor, paltry songster, nor allow
The simpering fool his fancy to beguile
With gentle beauty's approbating smile;
Yes, without mercy, I beseech, proscribe
In everlasting exile, the whole tribe.
I have an anecdote, I scarcely know
Where to insert, but since 'tis apropos,
And not less true, I think I may as well
Relate it here, just as the thing befell.
Miss Angelina Wilhelmina Stubbs
Was courted by Napoleon Jackson Dubbs,
Said Dubbs a lawyer's clerk, of promise rare,
And Angelina sensible and fair,
Only her stockings were a little blue,
But such a girl as you or I would woo.
One day unto her lover, the soft maid
Her gilt-edg'd album's splendid page display'd,
And sweetly smil'd, and said, "My Dubbs, my dear,
"I know to please me you'll write something here."

"Write what, my love, say, what shall I indite?
"Really, my fair, I know not what to write,"
He staring said, and anxious watch'd her look,
"Nay, but my hand would spoil so fine a book."
"Pshaw now," the maid replied, "you surely jest,
"Come, Mr. Dubbs, some verses I request
"From your own pen, some stanzas—I declare
"You're quite a bore; what makes the fellow stare?"
The lover seem'd astounded, look'd quite blank,
"Miss Stubbs," he said, "your civil speech I thank,
"And flatter'd feel by your polite demand,
"Couch'd in such terms 'twere graceless to with-
stand;
"But as to verse, I really can't comply,
"At stanzas yet I ne'er my hand did try,
"My studies are confin'd to legal prose,
"I rarely read such stuff, much less compose."
The lady bridled up and knit her brow,
"What! not write verses! then I'd have you know
"You're not the man for me, no, no, good lord!
"The Stubbses have some taste, and can't afford
"To waste their merits on dull souls like you;
"D'ye think I'd match with such a monster? Pooh!"
The lawyer bow'd, withdrew his case, because
'Twere vain to plead with love's capricious laws
He knew full well, abided a nonsuit,
And ceas'd his hopeless claims to prosecute.
—I sometimes hear a zealous bard exclaim
"What has the country done to foster fame?
"What has she done for genius and the muse?"
And of ingratitude the state accuse.

At this complaint, in mute surprise I stand,
This modest speech! this righteous reprimand!
What! when our country lets her sages die,
O'erwhelm'd by debt, and utter misery,
And higgles yearly o'er the paltry pay
Due to the veterans of the hard fought day
Which saw at length the tree of freedom bloom,
Blood-fed by those we now begrudge a crumb;
You'd have her make provision, I suppose,
For each vile dabbler both in verse and prose,
Appropriate perhaps the public land,
To glut and gorge the vast, voracious band
Of craving poetasters, begging bards,
Insatiate of honours and rewards.
The state, fond souls, must needs become dry nurse,
Or milch cow to the suckling sons of verse,
And Jonathan, forsooth, tear off the locks
For you alone, from his belov'd strong box.
But "hold!" I hear one cry, "not quite so fast,
"Think of the ills of poverty aghast,
"How hard it is with hunger pale to pine,
"Nor have alas! the wherewithal to dine.
"You would not have them starve and perish quite?"
No, pay them then, but pay them not to write.
And now, I bid you all adieu, my friends,
You see though harsh my strain, in peace it ends;
I feel no malice tow'rd you, know no spite,
Thirst not for vengeance, and no wrongs requite,
No drama damn'd, rejected lines, incite
My wrath, or sting me on to write;

I know you not, thank God, nor ever shall,
Not one of all who desperately scrawl,
And will scrawl on, for 'tis a hopeless ill
That ever baffles the physician's skill;
Who scribbles once, will scribble evermore,
Nor, self admir'd, the dirty trade give o'er;
'Tis thus with women, many never sin,
But then they never stop when they begin.
My purpose only is to give advice,
Free both from flattery and from prejudice,
Your manners to reform I wish, and cure
Your cacoethes fierce, and lust impure.
But take it thankfully as sinners shou'd,
Nor wince beneath the infliction of the rod,
Submit with penitence, I say, nor spurn
The hand which fain would do you a good turn;
Hath not the monarch wise, ye dull, self-will'd,
Of old, said, spare the rod and spoil the child?
For if you dare recalcitrate, nor reck
The lesson of to-day, this trifling check,
Take warning now before it be too late,
Ye mighty small ones, and ye little great,
I'll to the task again, and try a strain,
Which shall not, by your leave, be heard in vain;
Again Apollo's aid I will invoke,
And ply my weapon with a closer stroke,
Each recreant rhymster shall behold his name,
And notes and illustrations speak his shame.
—Now I have purg'd my choler, spilt my gall,
And feel more placid, I shall nought recall,
Write, rave, blaspheme, I do despise ye all.

Notes.

(1).

Sic ubi deseruit madidos septem fluus agros,
Nilus et antiquo sua flumina reddidit alveo
Æthereoque recens exarsit sidere limus;
Plurima cultores versis animalia glebis
Inveniunt, et in his quædam modo cœpta sub ipsum
Nascendi spatium: quædam imperfecta suisque
Trunca vident numeris; et eodem in corpore sæpe
Altera pars vivit; rudis est pars altera tellus.
Ovid. Metam. Lib. I.

(2).

"And the land stank, so numerous was the fry."
Cowper.

(3).

"*Great Dryden.*"

I have ranked Dryden in the list as a cotemporary, although he died the year previous to that in which Anne ascended the throne.

(4).

"*Counts like young David its ten thousand strong.*"

I find that my recollection of the passage to which this allusion is made was not accurate. It runs thus:—And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul has *slain* his thousands, and David his ten thousands.—1 *Saml.* xviii. 7.

(5).

"*Make Goshen cheeses.*"

These elegant products, I am told, derive their name from a place in New York, and not "old" New England. *C'est égal, cela revient au même.*

(6).

"*Byronize.*"

I have taken the liberty of inventing this verb, which corresponds in character with the Italian *Danteggiare*, to *Dantify*, i. e. to imitate Dante.

Epistle to H. A——r, M. D.

OF

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA.

Much lov'd and honor'd friend, accept this line,
An humble offering at affection's shrine,
Indulge the modest tribute of a heart
That clings to thine, tho' time and distance part,
And loves to dwell on days and hours gone by,
Though joy be mingled there with many an aching sigh.
Together have we roam'd the distant shore,
Where art and science spread their ample store,
Join'd arm in arm, have wander'd oft and long
O'er scenes immortaliz'd in poet's song,
Or fam'd for glorious deeds, the historic page
Hath blazon'd forth to each admiring age;
View'd where the mighty dead in dust repose,
O'er whom the shades of vanish'd centuries close
In vain, for oft lamenting genius weeps,
And memory o'er their tombs, her sacred vigil keeps.
Together have we plough'd the trackless main,
Where restless tempests hold their stormy reign
In wild dominion o'er the watery plain,
Mark'd the rough billows in their boisterous play,
And thought how like years, ages, roll away,
(Those waves that stir time's agitated sea
Awhile, then sink into eternity,)

Till landed on our native shore at last,
We turn and shudder at the perils past,
Not the fierce dangers of the tempest's force,
But those more threat'ning of youth's stormy course.
Through ev'ry changing scene of joy or ill,
Thy soul, my friend, was firm and faithful still,
Nor could affliction blight, though oft oppress'd
By grief, one holy feeling of thy breast ;
Then, know, could verse of mine aspire to fame,
With grateful pride, it should record thy name,
A name whose honest characters would grace
The page that flattery's breath shall ne'er deface.
An exile long upon a distant strand,
Once more upon my parent soil I stand,
Taste with delight of peace to me unknown,
Since four sad years with gloomy wing have flown,
And blest with respite short from anxious care,
And ills that wrung my spirit to despair,
Sooth'd by the stillness of a tranquil hour,
Oft yield my soul to meditation's pow'r ;
Whether with sauntering step I tread the lawn,
Or night's dark curtain o'er the scene be drawn,
Whether I haunt the busy walks of life,
Or steal to solitude from earth's low strife,
Conflicting thoughts commune within my breast,
Pursue my steps, the couch of sleep infest,
And frequent, from my eyelids banish rest.
Vain the proud wish to search with piercing eye,
Vain the attempt to fathom Deity,
And read the hidden counsels of that mind,
Which form'd fond mortals impotent and blind,

And spake to man, as to the billows' flow,
"Thus far thy course, no farther shalt thou go."
But vainer still would be the attempt to crush
Those thoughts aspiring, that for ever rush
Into the restless soul, and eager crave
Knowledge forbid, and seal'd until the grave;
Though oft repuls'd they still will question fate,
And seek with prying gaze the veil to penetrate.
For ever on the wing man's spirit soars,
Th' unfathomed abyss of thought explores,
Roams with bold flight the empyrean realm,
Or plunges where night's deepest shades o'erwhelm,
Unwearied roves through fancy's boundless reign,
Nor shrinks from dread Eternity's domain;
With heav'n directed eye aspiring, spurns
Her earthly dwelling, and for ever burns
For joys forbid, and knowledge hopeless here,
Found haply in some bright, celestial sphere,
The secret goal to which her longing tends,
But whose far entrance mortal bar defends.
Hence thy high dream, philosophy, proceeds,
Hence superstition with her countless creeds,
Hence the vain systems that pretend to scan,
And analyze creation's mighty plan;
A thousand schemes ingenious man hath wrought,
By fancy colour'd, with false learning fraught,
The hidden mystery of man t' expound,
And pluck the veil in which all things are bound.
Need I, my friend, dwell longer on this theme
And spread before thee each illustrious dream?

Shall I with Plato take my flight on high,
Or wallow in the "Epicurean stye?"
With oracles adorn my modest page,
Of old proclaim'd by Athens' god-like sage,
And cull, from ancient and from modern store,
A harvest rich of philosophic lore?
No, vain were such display; thou know'st full well,
And better far indeed than I can tell,
Each fond endeavour of the human mind
To grasp at Deity, his purpose find,
Explore the depths obscure of hidden fate,
The secrets dread of life, and death, to penetrate.
Mid these perplexing thoughts, that oft infest,
And ever agitate the anxious breast,
That lure the impatient soul in quest of light
In vain, to dissipate the gloom of night,
None more than this torments my troubled mind,
Or fills me with compassion for mankind;
The sad conviction, that the transient gleam
Of bliss, is but an unsubstantial dream,
Whose visions bright seduce the eye of youth
With radiant hopes that fly the touch of truth;
And when I view the chace of transient good
That still contrives the eager grasp t' elude,
And mark the brilliant prospects that caress
The soul with promise bright of happiness,
Then fade away, and as they disappear,
Leave in the breast, a void all dark and drear,
Was man, I sometimes ask, as hath been said,
The sport of heaven, its jest and riddle made?

Or was he form'd by some foul fiend of night
To vent on him his vengeance and his spite?
No, far from me such impious thought be driv'n,
Let me not mock the majesty of heav'n;
My purpose only is to show the cloud
That wraps man's destiny as in a shroud,
The mist in which he wanders, and the gloom
That shades his weary passage to the tomb.
The time will doubtless come, perhaps 'tis near,
When plain the awful mystery shall appear,
When God shall deem it proper to display
His hidden purposes, his secret way,
And night and darkness, yield to heaven's eternal
day.
—In the bright morning of our days, when life
With all the blooming charms of youth is rife,
When health and glowing spirits ever cheer,
And deck with smiles the spring time of the year,
When undeceiv'd by knowledge of the past,
We deem each fair enchanting scene will last,
At list confiding to the syren voice
Of soothing hope, that ever bids rejoice;
Bright hour! when all things lovely haunt the breast,
And joyous innocence affords a zest
To bliss, that later pleasures cannot know,
Nor after life again on man bestow;
In that fair dawn of life's expanding day,
What visions bright around the fancy play,
What tempting dreams of bliss the soul caress,
Of joys untold, and untried happiness!

A thousand gay imaginations rise,
And dimly float before the ravish'd eyes,
Unutterable thoughts the bosom swell
With vague emotions language cannot tell,
Fantastic hopes the exulting breast elate,
And raptures high the soul intoxicate.
Methinks the ardent youth reclin'd I see
Beneath the shade of some fair spreading tree,
While at his outstretch'd feet a rivulet flows,
That makes a gentle murmuring as it goes,
Mingling its music with the soothing sound
Of summer winds, that breathe a fragrance round;
The enchanting beauties of the scene and hour,
Come o'er his spirit with a magic pow'r,
Charming each sense acute to ecstacy,
Till sinks his soul at length, deep plung'd in reverie.
Mark the flush'd cheek, the eye to heav'n addrest
With fix'd and fervent glance, the labouring breast
That strives in vain for speech, the kindling brow
That with unearthly ardour seems to glow.
Who that beholds the rapture of that eye
Whose gaze intense is proudly fix'd on high,
As if the soul to hold communion strove
With the bright throng that tread the courts above,
Or pierce at least the dazzling curtain thro'
That hides the blest abodes from mortal view,
Ah! who, I ask, with tongue of earthly mould
Can speak the things that in that glance are told,
The musings proud reveal, or hope to tell
The thrilling thoughts that in that bosom swell?

How eager then the unquiet spirit spurns
The present hour, the moments past, and burns
To take her perilous flight with wing unfurl'd,
And fearless launch upon a stormy world.
Thus the proud courser at the starting place,
Longs with impatience to begin the race,
His ardent courage scarce can be represt,
His eye darts flame, and heaves his swelling chest,
He neighs indignant, frequent paws the ground,
Till loos'd, he rushes with impetuous bound.
Ah! could it but endure, life's dawning hour
Whose fruit belies the promise of the flow'r!
Could they but stay, those moments bright of joy,
Nor beauty fade, nor sorrow's blight destroy!
Those tempting visions linger, that adorn
The blooming scenes of life's enchanting morn!
Vain wish that combats the decree of fate,
Change is the tenure of our mortal state,
The never failing law of nature's reign,
Whose sway upholds creation's boundless chain;
Earth, ocean, air, and all that they embrace,
When time at length hath run his weary race,
Must perish, we are told, and sink in gloom;
Mortality's inevitable doom
Nought can escape—above, around, beneath,
Destruction plies with fell unsparing breath,
The universal frame awaits impending death.
—Thus youth's fair prospect changes, and the day
That with bright promise op'd his smiling way,
Sees clouds arise, and threat'ning tempests low'r
To mar the beauties of the dawning hour.

Each op'ning bud, each blooming flow'ret dies,
Each joy, each hope, in dust prostrated lies;
Fortune's gay smiles, that erst propitious shone,
Scar'd by adversity's malignant frown,
Fade and depart, the shades of sorrow fall,
Till night's dark veil at length envelopes all;
Spring flies, and gloomy winter's icy breath
Levels the vernal scene in undistinguish'd death.
Consult thine own emotions, and compare
Thine early feelings with what now they are,
A moment stop thine onward course, and cast
Thy vision from the present to the past,
The everflowing stream of time trace back
E'en to the verge of childhood's flow'ry track,
Survey the vanish'd scenes, the prospects fled,
The hopes, the joys, now mingling with the dead;
Evoke and bid, as with a magic wand,
The spirits of the past before thee stand.
Behold! they come, they flit like shadows by,
The motley train of youth's gay pageantry,
Unnumber'd forms of shadowy shape and hue,
Whose charms, though dimm'd, still tempt the long-
ing view.
Sad is the vision of that spectral band,
Hov'ring like shades upon the Lethean strand;
No voice is theirs indeed, no hollow sound
The solemn stillness breaks that reigns around,
No tone is heard from that sepulchral throng,
Of joy or woe, as slow it flits along,

Save some sad notes, that faintly, gently, swell
Upon the ear, of joys gone by that tell,
Like the far echo of a passing knell.
Now look around, the chequer'd scene survey,
Pursue the steps that throng life's crowded way,
Observe the candidates for bliss that press,
And join the ardent chace for happiness;
Behold the eager train that hope impels,
And fortune binds in her delusive spells,
Mark how they mingle in the headlong chace,
Each striving still the other to displace,
As if for one alone were kept the honors of the race.
Then say of that vast multitude how few,
If any, ever reach the goal in view,
Or pluck with eager grasp the tempting prize,
That bright and dazzling lures the longing eyes,
Though oft it seem in reach, nor far the end
To which their hastening footsteps ever tend.
Whether they run with aspect fix'd on high,
Or grovelling creep with earthward bending eye,
Whether with lofty hopes the bosom glow,
Or grosser joys of sense alone it know,
Whether love's flame the raptur'd breast excite,
With transports vague of more than earth's delight,
Ambition mad, the thirst to win a name,
Stir the proud soul in quest of deathless fame,
Or low pursuit of wealth absorb the mind,
That prompts the meaner spirits of mankind,

Whate'er the impulse, and whate'er the end,
Or high or low the anxious vision bend,
Like disappointment doth each fond pursuit attend.
—Here, let me hold, for ah! 'tis sad to trace
The various ills which human life deface,
Sad the long catalogue of woes to tell
Whose gloomy list might countless pages swell;
No, let me rather turn the averted eye
From each dark scene of wrong and misery,
Seek in forgetfulness the sense to steep,
Of sorrow's pangs o'er which in vain we weep,
And drown each bitter, self-tormenting thought
Of hopeless suffering with which earth is fraught;
Like him who stretch'd upon the couch of pain,
Flies to the oblivious draught, nor flies in vain,
But finds a refuge sweet, though brief, from woes
That rack'd his frame with agonizing throes.
The voice of wisdom hath proclaim'd of old,
This truth by sad experience ever told,
By saint declar'd, by sceptic, and by sage,
On ev'ry shore, in each revolving age,
"All, all, is utter vanity below,
Vexation of the spirit all we know;"
A truth the monarch feels upon his throne,
Alike the wretch who toils for life alone,
The victor 'mid the trophies of the brave,
The lord of empires and the quivering slave;
In ev'ry state, in each pursuit confest,
Or hid at least within the aching breast,

(For smiles will sometimes play, and gladness shine,
Yet mask the bitterness of grief within,)
And countless volumes could not make appear
This oracle of oracles, more clear.
Then why, you ask, this melancholy tale,
These sad repinings, that can nought avail,
Why these complaints that strike at nature's plan,
Yet cannot change the destiny of man?
Thick shades in gloom his course mysterious shroud,
Nor can we pierce the impenetrable cloud;
'Twere wiser sure life's cureless ills to bear,
With patient soul, nor murmur, nor despair,
Heav'n's high decrees are ever just and right,
Though thus they do not always strike our sight,
Nor are the lofty ways of Providence
Fit for the feeble grasp of mortal sense.
With confidence and hope await the end;
There we shall learn at length, and comprehend
The ways mysterious, dark designs of Him,
Whose hidden path defies conjecture dim;
Knowledge, whose light we vainly seek to know
While groping blindly on our course below:
'Tis folly's part to weep our sad estate,
Nor tears, nor sighs, can melt inexorable fate.
True, yet 'tis hard within the bosom's core,
To nurse, and pine in silent sadness o'er
Ills, though irreparable, pangs, though vain,
And weak it be to murmur and complain,
The utterance of woe assuages grief,
And sympathy, thou know'st, is sweet relief.

Be this my sole excuse, as here I end
My strain, and claim the indulgence of a friend,
Who ne'er hath view'd my faults with eye severe,
Whose mild and modest censure yet I fear,
And whose esteem and love unto my soul are dear.

THE TOMB OF ST. HELENA.

——— hoc quod premis, inquit, habeto,
De tot agris terræ.
Ovid. Metam. Lib. V.

Calm was the air, serene the sky,
And nought was heard around,
Save the hovering seabird's mournful cry,
And the ocean's hollow sound,
That murmurs round the narrow strand,
Fragment of Afric's far-off land.

I gaz'd in silence on the spot,
The solitary grave,
Of him who ne'er shall be forgot,
The mighty and the brave,
The warrior chief whose glorious name
Stands first upon the roll of fame.

Doth not some proud memorial rise
In triumph o'er his head,
Some pyramid whose strength defies
Time's ever-wasting tread,
Frowning, like those his prowess won,
Solemn and stern, 'neath Egypt's sun?

No sculptur'd columns towering swell
  Triumphant to the skies,
Nor monumental trophies tell
  Where slumbering he lies,
But, spreading in funereal gloom,
A willow waves above the tomb.

What though no proud mausoleum crown
  The hero's dust beneath,
Nor pyramid of ages frown
  In majesty of death!
The simple grandeur of a name
Unmatch'd in time, is ample fame.

Words cannot tell what feelings rose
  Within my stirring breast,
While gazing where, in dread repose,
  Those mouldering ashes rest,
But late the dwelling of a mind
Earth's mighty limits scarce could bind.

A mingled memory of the deeds
  Of him who sleeps beneath,
Of thrones that fall, a world that bleeds,
  Of hosts who pour their breath
To swell the blast of fame—for whom?
The tenant of that lonely tomb.

I thought me on Marengo's day,
And Adda's crimson'd flood,
Where youthful valour bore away
The victory of blood,
When glory kindled round that brow
Now mingling with the dust below.

Thy combat, too, dark Austerlitz!
The deadly strife for pow'r,
How ill this noiseless strife befits
Thine appalling hour!
Nor wert thou absent from my view,
Tomb of the valiant—Waterloo!

And musing with myself, I said,
While gazing on that spot,
"Must thou, whom thrones and realms obey'd,
Share too the common lot,
That mingles in the selfsame earth
Princes and those of lowliest birth?

The imperial crown that girt thy brow,
The sceptre of a world,
Where are they fled? ah! where is now
Thine awful sword that hurl'd
From their high seats of kingly pow'r
The craven monarchs of an hour?

And where are they, the martial train,
The pride, the pomp of war?
Shall ne'er the cannon's voice again,
Like thunder from afar,
Come rolling o'er the Atlantic wave,
And rouse thee from thy tranquil grave?

The trumpet's clang, the clash of arms,
No more shall wake thy sleep,
Nor at the conflict's stern alarms,
Thy soul, proud spirit, leap:
The din of battle's maddening roar
Ne'er echos from this silent shore.

Is this the end of glory's strife,
Ambition's bright reward,
For which was offer'd up a life
From peace, from bliss, debarr'd?
This the rich prize, bestow'd by fame?
An exile's grave! a fearful name!"

Majestic shade, I would not seek
To injure thy repose,
Nor on thy tomb reproaches wreak,
I am not of thy foes:
Thy path will ne'er again be trod,
Who wert on earth a demigod.

In adopting the metrical form of the celebrated hymn to Light by Cowley, and that to Darkness by Yalden, I have not been governed by chance or caprice, but by a conviction of its appropriateness to subjects like those for which I have employed it.

ODE TO THE DEITY.

Nihil aliud est natura, quam Deus, et divina quædam ratio toti mundo, et partibus ejus inserta.

Seneca.

Principio cœlum ac terras, camposque liquentes
Lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra,
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus,
Mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet.

Virg. Æneid. lib. vi.

Being of unimaginable might,
Unspeakably sublime and bright,
Enthron'd in majesty on high
For evermore, lone dweller of Eternity!

Source of all light and life, Almighty cause!
Ere time began, or nature was,
Existing in thyself, Creative Mind!
Wisdom conceptionless, Power graspless, unconfin'd!

How shall man's feeble accents speak thy name,
God of the universal frame!
Or tongue of earth essay to express
The vast, the incomprehensible, the measureless?

For such thy nature is, mysterious One!
Untold, unrivall'd, and alone,
Whose limit is infinite space,
In splendour unapproachable who veil'st thy face.

First Author of all things, Fountain of life!
Thou bad'st the elemental strife
Begin, the word of pow'r was spoke,
And leaping from the womb, rejoicing nature woke.

Eye of the universe, thy boundless view
Immensity doth wander thro',
Thy single glance with mightiest ray,
Creation's vast domain doth evermore survey.

Mysterious Providence! whose hand unseen
Impels, controuls the world's machine,
Chance, Fortune, Destiny or Fate,
Whate'er we call, thy power doth all things regulate.

Eternal spirit! from whose centre flow,
In unremitting streams below,
All motion and all life, thy soul
Extends thro' every part and stirs the mighty whole.

Preserver of all beings! from on high
Gazing with ever watchful eye,
Thine arm upholds the endless chain
Of life, and ever doth the universe sustain.

King of eternity! thou lookest down
Serene, from thine immortal throne,
On all thy various works below,
From thine exhaustless hand perpetual blessings flow.

The iron chain of stern necessity
Thy force controuls not, thy decree
Is fate, which Heaven dare not gainsay,
And Earth and Hell's deep bounds with trembling awe obey.

Thy simple word is infinite pow'r, thy nod,
Dread signet of the approving God,
The stamp of destiny, thy will
But speaks, and myriads rush its mandates to fulfil.

The page of nature where reveal'd we see
A distant glimmering of Thee,
Thy veil reflects, the glorious sun
Is but the shadow dim of thine effulgent throne.

The gorgeous canopy o'erspread by night,
With countless constellations bright,
The silver radiance of the moon,
Retiring, fade before the splendour of thy noon.

Ocean, whose restless, storm-excited swell,
Deep surging from the caves of Hell,
Shakes either pole, and threats the sky,
Is as a drop compar'd with thine immensity.

The tempest's rage whose fearful breath lays waste
Kingdoms with desolating blast,
The whirlwind's rushing chariot, these
To thee are as the sport of summer's whispering
breeze.

The thunder's loud reverberating din
Is as the still small voice, within
Thine ear, the flashings of the sky
Are darkness to the light of thine all lustrous eye.

The wild, portentous comet's trackless race,
Whose wanderings science cannot trace,
Far shooting thro' the realm of night,
Is motionless before thine all pervading sight.

The countless tribes which people the wide earth,
With those that from creation's birth
Have been, the myriads that each star,
Each sun, each system, holds, with Thee as nothing
are.

The Stygian realms, death's silent, sad domain,
E'en these confess thy searching reign,
Thy voice can bid the Lethean wave
Emerge to light, can burst the barriers of the grave.

The shore where disembodied spirits dwell,
Whose awful secrets none can tell,
Where crowding from each clime await
The trembling shades, their last, irrevocable fate.

The mystic, cloud-wrapp'd land whence none return,
Once pass'd the inexorable bourne,
The shrouded mansions of the tomb,
To Thee alone, reveal the terrors of their gloom.

The soaring spirit that inspires man's breast,
Mortality's immortal guest,
This craving, knowledge-thirsting soul,
From thee its source, first sprang, still seeks Thee
as its goal.

Dark and invisible are all thy ways,
Dark from the splendour of thy blaze,
Thy glorious path is veil'd in night
To mortal eyes, because insufferably bright.*

Being! whom worlds untold of magnify,
For stretch of human thought too high,
Source of thy proper happiness,
Unutterable name, infinite, fathomless!

* Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear.
Milton.

Almighty ! who thro' endless time dost live,
And shalt all other life survive,
To whom eternity is as a speck
Of mist, a drop dissolv'd, the universal wreck.

Whose glory ear hath not heard, eye hath not seen,
Whose lustre maketh light a screen,
Whose image thought can ne'er attain
Tho' wandering to the verge of fancy's utmost reign.

Before the splendour of whose glittering throne,
The dazzled cherubim fall down,
From whose effulgent, living blaze
The seraph with his glorious wings defends his gaze.

Unspeakable, unsearchable, where lie
The springs of immortality,
Essence of all existence, Soul
Of the universe, Great God ! Thyself, the wondrous
Whole.

Shuddering with awe and terror at the glare
Of thy perfections, if I dare
Essay to shadow forth thy form,
Dread Monarch of all things, crush not the aspiring
worm.

THE SISTER OF CHARITY.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that the Sœurs de Charité, are a religious order, whose duty it is to nurse the sick and relieve the afflicted, and whose lives are incessantly devoted to these pious offices.

Sister of Charity! whose pious cares
Support the sick man on the couch of woe,
Whose sacrifice more sweet than empty pray'rs
Ascends to heav'n, like incense from below,
Can aught of formal worship match with thine,
Fair child of piety, and grace divine?

Thy ceaseless office is the work of love,
To soothe the sufferings of the sons of pain,
With zealous ardour kindled from above
To sympathize with woe, with calming strain
To whisper to the sin-sick bosom rest,
Child of benevolence, thy deed how blest!

With anxious look and sweetly melting eye,
I see thee bending o'er the sick man's head,
And ev'ry soft endearment fondly try,
To pluck the thorns that o'er his couch are spread,
While tears of pity flow adown thy cheek,
And heavenly love glows in thine aspect meek.

And when all hope of mortal life hath fled
  Thou striv'st to give the tortur'd breast release,
Exultingly thou point'st beyond the dead,
  And whispering to the sin-sick bosom peace,
Thy soft, persuasive accents more controul
Than formal homilies, the shrinking soul.

How enviable is thy happy lot!
  How blissful is thy calm and peaceful way!
Life's vexing cares and sorrows, all forgot,
  No lowering clouds deform thy cheerful day,
But shelter'd from the ills that vice await,
Sister of charity, how blest thy state!

Thy time flows gently 'twixt thy cares and God,
  No pangs of conscience gnaw with bitter tooth,
Thy bosom feels not guilt's oppressive load,
  Illumin'd by the rays of heavenly truth,
A holy rapture settles on thy brow,
And in thy face, faith, hope, ecstatic glow.

How happier far than mine, thy tranquil state,
  A prey to restless passion's ceaseless war,
Now low desponding, now, with hope elate,
  And sure when happy, sorrow is not far,
Angel of love! what would I not resign,
Pow'r, glory, fame, to change my fate for thine?

TO THE SPIRIT OF THE STORM.

Written at Sea.

Terrific spirit of the raging storm,
  Thou that in gloom, and havoc dost rejoice,
Delighting nature's visage to deform,
  And frighting earth with thine alarming voice,
Dread spirit, that o'er land and sea dost roam,
Wild wanderer of the air, say, where hast thou
    thy home?

Lov'st thou in savage regions of the north
  In "palaces of thick-ribb'd ice" to reign,
Or answer, dost thou rather wander forth
  Where suns meridian scorch the sandy plain?
Thy course is various, now thou shak'st the pole,
And now thy blasting steps o'er burning deserts roll.

Wild terror is thy herald, and thy train
  Death and gaunt famine, follow in thy rear,
Thine awful breath is heard athwart the plain,
  And nations at the sound grow pale with fear,
The thunder is thy voice, and from thine eye
Dart livid lightnings through the dusky mantled sky.

The winds that wild o'er ocean's bosom sweep,
  These are the couriers that thy mandates bear,
Which do thine errands in the mighty deep,
  Coursing with swiftness through the empty air,
The circling whirlwind is thy restless throne,
Thy mantle is of clouds, and meteors form thy crown.

Thy chariot is the dread tornado's blast
  Which rusheth fiercely o'er the craven earth,
Tracing its path with desolating waste,
  Seated on which thou ridest proudly forth,
Spirit of wrath! in vengeance onward sent,
Thou minglest nature's forms in one wild element.

Before thy face proud man is struck with fear,
  And trembling looks around him for relief;
He feels his littleness when thou art near,
  And cowering sinks in dark dismay and grief;
Thou crushest populous cities in thy wrath
Like empty spray which garnisheth thy watery path.

Destruction is thy sport, thou blow'st thy breath,
  Dark spirit, ruthless in thy direful might,
And hurlest thousands to a gloomy death,
  Against thy wrath 'tis vain for man to fight,
Majestic navies, riding on the wave,
Thou plungest with thine arm beneath a billowy
    grave.

Thy music is the moaning of the blast
  Mingled with wailings of the drowning wretch,
The dash of billows in the watery waste,
  The roar of ocean, and the sea bird's screech,
These thou delight'st to hear, while ruin stalks,
And desolation grim o'er nature's bosom walks.

TO ETERNITY.

Infinity of time! whose boundless whole,
The insatiate, all-searching soul
Essays in vain to comprehend,
Thou that didst ne'er begin nor yet shalt ever end!

Can nought our souls conceive, of thee impart
Some faint idea, thou that art
Coeval with the Deity,
Who though he made all things existed not ere thee?

An ocean without shores, and fathomless,
Thy substance yet doth not increase,
Though all devouring in thy course,
Nought of created things to thwart thy power hath force.

Thou art incomprehensibly sublime;
Compar'd with thy duration, time
An infant is, that views the light,
Then shuts its dazzled eyes in never ending night.

Ere earth was form'd thou held'st thy lonely sway,
Or ere the sun gave birth to day,
The constellations of the sky
Thou view'st as momentary meteors on high.

Thou hast nor youth, nor age, no change thou hast,
The future ever as the past,
Unnumber'd ages roll in vain,
From thine exhaustless womb they are produc'd
again.

Years, what are they to thee, e'en ages, say?
The drops that form thine ocean, yea,
The vapory atoms that ascend,
Then melting fall again and with its bosom blend.

To thee what is an empire's ruin, nay a world,
Into destruction's vortex hurl'd?
Calmly thou keep'st thy silent way,
Unmindful though the universe itself decay.

Thou art a mystery on which the mind
In contemplation is struck blind,
Vainly thought seeks some refuge nigh,
To rest its flight, when lost in thine immensity.

Whate'er of grand or mighty we behold,
Or in imagination's told,
The image e'en we have of thee,
Compar'd with what thou art, is nought, Eternity!

TO MIRTH.

Say sportive nymph, with laughing eye,
And step that bounds so merrily,
  Why wilt thou flee my path?
To fright thee, Mirth, what have I done,
That thou my fond pursuit dost shun,
  Say, how deserv'd thy wrath?

Time was when thou did'st ceaseless bless
My blithesome heart with fond caress,
  For ever at my side,
How jocundly I tripp'd along,
The groves resounded with my song,
  That gloomy care defied.

Young health then nerv'd my active frame,
Nought could my dauntless ardour tame,
  And every joy was near,
No pining sorrows gnaw'd my breast,
Nor anxious cares disturb'd my rest,
  A stranger then to fear.

Exulting hope inspir'd my heart,
And constant plied her soothing art
  With scenes of heavenly hue,
While fancy bade her prospects rise,
Ting'd with a thousand brilliant dyes,
  Before my raptur'd view.

And every scene of hill or dale,
Each murmuring stream, and summer gale,
  Brought bliss without alloy,
And every tone that breath'd around,
And every flower that deck'd the ground,
  Was redolent of joy.

But now that thou hast ta'en thy flight,
And wilt no longer bless my sight,
  Alas! how chang'd the scene,
What numerous ills my soul invade,
While melancholy spreads her shade,
  A prey to vexing spleen.

The hue of health has left my brow,
No more my ardent feelings glow
  With rapturous delight,
Dark, boding thoughts my mind assail,
And powers of soul and body fail
  Beneath a withering blight.

Ah! come again, inspiring mirth!
And stir the languid bosom's dearth
  With thine awak'ning voice,
Disperse the gloomy clouds that spread,
In lowering shadows o'er my head,
  And bid my soul rejoice.

TO MELANCHOLY.

Rapt nymph with earth-ward bending view,
And pensive face of pallid hue,
  Contemplatively wild,
In vain I strive to shun thy sight,
Thy very frowns are my delight,
  Affliction's wayward child.

In infancy's unthinking hour,
Ere yet misfortune's chastening pow'r
  Had weigh'd my spirit down,
I sought with thee, in solitude,
From noisy strife and clamours rude,
  A refuge sad and lone.

And still with thee I love to rove,
By haunted stream or shadowy grove,
  Neath moonlight's pensive sway,
Or where a never ending night,
Thick verdure scarce admits of light,
  A solitary ray.

To linger by some ancient tow'r,
That stands, of time's decaying pow'r
  A mouldering monument,
While sweeping through deserted halls,
Re-echoed from the tottering walls,
  The moaning blast is sent.

But most with thee I love to tread
The silent mansions, where the dead
  Repose in lonely gloom,
Where solitude and stillness throw
A calm o'er those who sleep below,
  The sabbath of the tomb.

Thou lov'st to dwell upon the past,
Thy retrospective glance to cast
  Upon the times gone by,
While venerable shades of yore,
In garb sepulchral crowd before
  Thy fancy's gloomy eye.

Thou art the nurse of wild romance,
And genius catches from thy glance
  Exulting ecstacies,
The flame his frenzied eye that fires
Thou light'st, and 'tis thy soul inspires
  His burning reveries.

Thy presence hath a hallow'd charm,
Which can e'en wisdom's pow'r disarm,
  Can pleasure's influence quell,
Such beauty thou dost lend to grief,
We strive not e'er to seek relief
  From thine absorbing spell.*

* La mélancolie est une volupté sérieuse.
Montaigne.

Sweet hour of moonlight's pensive sway,
How, lovelier far than gaudier day!
Robing each scene of hill or dale,
Within thy soft and silvery veil,
I love to gaze upon thy light,
So sweetly fair, so mildly bright.

Thy placid smiles which all invest,
Compose the troubled soul to rest,
And hush in silent, soft repose
The bosom's agonizing throes,
Sweet hour! thou giv'st thy gentle tone
To all thy radiance shines upon.

Thy soft expanse of mellow light
Shed gently o'er the face of night,
Imparts a feeling to the mind
Intense, pathetic, calm, refin'd,
And to my view thou seem'st to be
The hour of nature's reverie.

How often have I lonely stray'd
With anxious footstep through the glade
The partner of my love to meet,
While thrill'd my soul with visions sweet,
Mov'd by thine influence from above,
Sweet hour! thou sure wert made for love.

When leaning o'er the vessel's side
The sea boy views the rolling tide,
While sportively the billows dance,
Lit by thy brightly glimmering glance,
He thinks upon his distant home,
And sighs the fate that made him roam:

For crowds upon his pensive thought
Each pleasing scene by memory wrought,
When 'neath thy heavenly beaming ray
In childhood he was wont to play,
And sad, he thinks, how long before
His eyes shall greet his native shore.

The tints which daylight brings to view,
Thou minglest in one milder hue,
And though indeed less bright, less gay,
Thou seemest but a softer day:
Delightful hour! to thee is giv'n
A look, a tone, which breathes of heav'n.

LINES

Upon viewing in the Louvre, the celebrated picture supposed to represent the mistress of Titian.

Being of light and love, whose form,
The pictur'd traits of vanish'd life,
Is yet with animation warm,
With glowing loveliness so rife,
Wert thou indeed a child of earth,
Or but a dream's ecstatic birth?

If thou didst live, I envy much
The happy mortal who possess'd
Those matchless charms of heavenly touch,
Who with an angel's love was blest:
'Tis bliss to look upon that face,
What then to clasp in love's embrace!

If thou wast not, I envy still
The unrivall'd soul that could command,
And call before its view at will,
Such beings, that with fancy's wand
Could people earth with forms like this,
And revel in the ideal bliss.

While gazing on thy radiant brow,
  Thy dove-like eye, and raptur'd cheek,
Methinks a bright, seraphic glow
  Is kindled in thine aspect meek,
Thy charms are so unearthly fair,
Thou seem'st a rainbow thing of air.

Perhaps thou wert a remnant lone
  Of those bright beings who of yore
From their high seats woo'd angels down
  To earth, as taught in holy lore:
If still such forms below had birth
Were heaven a fit exchange for earth?

THE MOOR'S LAMENT.

I have somewhere read, that the Moors, when driven from Spain by their relentless conquerors, would for generations after, visit the shore of Barbary, and casting their eyes over the waters towards their lamented country, shed tears for its loss, and offer up vows for its recovery.

On the silent shore an old man stood,
His locks were white and spare,
And he gaz'd upon the sullen flood,
With a melancholy air.

Deep plung'd in reverie he seem'd,
That sad and lonely one,
As if of days gone by, he dream'd,
Of joys decay'd and flown.

And ever and anon he would
Lift up his hollow eye,
And peer, as if beyond the flood
Some far off land to spy.

Vainly his vision wander'd wide,
Tho' bright the heav'ns expanse,
And calm and smooth the ocean tide,
Nought met his searching glance,

The tear drops gather'd in his eye,
And roll'd his cheeks adown,
And his bosom heav'd an aching sigh,
As sad he stood, and lone.

"And ah!" he cried, "shall I ne'er again
Thy lovely shores behold,
Delightful Spain! delightful Spain!
Where my fathers dwelt of old.

Thine is the land where in beauteous glow,
The flower and fruit unite,
O'er beds of gold thy rivers flow,
And thy heav'n is pure and bright.

The joyous days of youth I sped
Mid thy fountains cool and bow'rs,
Ere the sons of the prophet sorrowing fled
From the sword of the haughty giaours.

Grenada! Grenada! thy lofty walls
Are levell'd to the ground,
The maidens and swains that danc'd in thy halls,
Are there no longer found.

The stranger hath made the Alhambra his home,
Each beauteous grove and bow'r,
And fountain reflecting the orange tree's bloom,
Hath pass'd to the infidel's pow'r.

The sons of the prophet are scatter'd wide,
In distant realms they stray,
They weep when they think of their fallen pride,
And their splendour past away.

And with constant pray'r their hearts implore
The God who reigns above,
That again to their vows he would restore
The country of their love.

And shalt not mine aged eyes again
Thy lovely shores behold,
Delightful Spain! delightful Spain!
Where my fathers dwelt of old?"

Why shrouds unchanging gloom the brow
And flows the never ceasing tear?
Though adverse fortune darken now,
Let hope the sinking spirit cheer,
Then weep no longer, child of sorrow!
A brighter hour will come to-morrow.

Affliction cannot always last,
Misfortune will not ever lower,
The fiercest storms are quickest past,
A calm succeeds the tempest's power,
Then weep no longer, child of sorrow!
A brighter hour will come to-morrow.

The fairest day must set in night,
And summer yield to winter's gloom,
But darkness flies the morning light,
And earth revives in vernal bloom,
Then weep no longer, child of sorrow!
A brighter hour will come to-morrow.

Say, stranger, would'st thou know for whom
Was rais'd this lone, sequester'd tomb,
Whose simple head with wreaths is crownd,
Cull'd from the flowers that bloom around?

She was a fair and lovely maid,
In all the charms of youth array'd,
Whose lover left his native land,
To combat on a distant strand.

And thus the mournful tidings came,
That urged by glory's stirring flame,
He sought the battle's thickest tide,
And bravely fighting, bled and died.

There came no tear into her eye,
Her aching breast heav'd not a sigh,
As this was told, but one faint shriek
Was all her anguish'd soul could wreak.

She did not even speak his name,
From her prest lips no lament came,
Sole sign of grief, the deadly hue
That o'er her cheek its paleness threw.

A father's pray'r, a mother's wail,
Could nought upon her woe prevail,
Silent she sate, as though her ear
Refus'd their soothing tones to hear.

And oft with pensive step she sought
This valley near, whose groves were fraught
With fond memorials of the hours,
When love and bliss were in its bowers.

Yes, hither would she frequent come,
With heedless, sauntering step to roam,
Her madness was of silent mood,
And memory was its bitter food.

A stranger enter'd, as she stray'd
One day in her accustom'd glade,
In the proud garb of glory drest,
The star of honour on his breast.

He enters, sudden stops, and then
With hasty step proceeds again,
Again he stops, "Ah! can it be?
"Yes! yes!" he cries, "'tis she! 'tis she!"

He rush'd and clasp'd her to his breast,
His throbbing heart her bosom prest,
He spoke not, but the frequent tear
Fell showering on her temples clear.

At length he could pronounce the name
Whose tone he lov'd, no answer came,
She seem'd to cling unto his heart,
But not a breath her lips impart.

He press'd her face with tender glow,
Cold was the damp upon her brow,
Wildly his maddening eyeballs stray,
A corpse within his arms she lay.

How few the joys man's life affords
To satisfy his high desires!
How little that he meets, accords
With that for which his soul aspires!
Vainly he looks around to find
Scenes that are pictur'd in his mind.

He seems a being form'd to dwell
In realms not such as here below,
The thoughts that in his bosom swell,
Kindle with an unearthly glow,
Perhaps a wanderer from a clime,
More suited to his soul sublime.

A longing stirs within his heart,
And agitates his anxious breast,
For objects earth cannot impart,
Nor lull his lofty soul to rest,
A feeling high and undefin'd,
That racks in vain his restless mind.

Is it of heavenly fire a spark
That still inspires his earthly frame,
A glimmering lamp amid the dark,
To point his soul from whence it came,
A ray divine, whose light is giv'n
To mark his kindredship with heav'n?

REPLY TO A FREQUENT QUESTION.

Why am I sad? ah! can I smile
Mid sorrow, suffering, care and toil,
And all the ills which make our life
A pilgrimage of pain and strife?

Why am I sad? but look around
And view earth to its farthest bound,
Can aught thou seeest make thee gay,
Thou sportive thing of fragile clay?

Why am I sad? where seek for rest
With vultures preying in the breast,
Passions that crave in vain their food,
And tumults boiling in the blood?

Why am I sad? behold that form
Now icy cold, but late 'twas warm
With glowing hope, and soft desire,
And kindled with celestial fire.

Why am I sad? that ancient man
Shall answer for me, well he can,
Does aught he speaks thy bosom cheer?
His only answer is a tear.

Why am I sad? behold the car
That bears the blood-stain'd god of war,
Plagues, famines, earthquakes, storms, arise,
And banish gladness from mine eyes.

Why am I sad? I stand upon
The dust of generations gone;
Like those, I soon must pass away,
And night involve my transient day.

Oh! the bright days when youth had pow'r
To lend a charm to ev'ry hour,
When nature seem'd for ever fair,
And undisturb'd by anxious care,
With heedless step along we mov'd,
And gather'd joys where'er we rov'd.

Oh! the bright days when early love
First in the panting bosom strove,
And with a magic influence stole
Into the unpolluted soul,
When spread before the ravish'd eyes
A fair, enchanting paradise.

Oh! the bright days, when fairy dreams,
Array'd in fancy's loveliest beams,
We fondly deem'd would never pass,
Now faded, vanish'd, all, alas!
Ah! could such blissful ign'rance stay,
Nor yield to truth's relentless ray.

Oh! the bright days when unconfin'd,
In future regions rov'd the mind,
When by experience sad, untaught,
Angelic hope, gay visions wrought,
And spread before the raptur'd view
Scenes deck'd with ev'ry heavenly hue.

Oh! the bright days when all things smil'd,
Ere through life's thorny paths we toil'd,
Ere yet by frequent sorrows scarr'd,
The bosom callous grew and hard,
Ah! those bright days for which we burn,
Are gone and never to return.

A DREAM AT SEVENTEEN.

The fervid sun now past the midway heav'n,
Mov'd on with languid pace tow'rd milder ev'n,
Oppress'd with heat and toil I bent my course
To where a cooling fountain took its source.

Here on a mossy bank, beneath a tree,
My couch the turf, verdure my canopy,
I sank in sweet forgetfulness to rest,
While zephyrs bland my senseless form carest.

Scarce were my weary eyes in slumber seal'd
And by their curtains from the day conceal'd,
When sportive fancy, gay, aerial queen,
Of bright, unreal forms compos'd a scene.

A blooming garden round me spread, methought
With ev'ry charm, for every sense, twas fraught,
A thousand flow'rs their varied gifts unite,
Some by their fragrance, some their hues, delight.

Here stretch'd a silver lake its smooth expanse,
Upon whose polish'd face the sunbeams dance,
There rose a shady grove in stately form,
An equal shelter from the heat and storm.

With various fruits the bending branches hung,
And on the breeze their spicy odours flung,
With sweetest songs of birds the ear was charm'd,
And ev'ry sense, and ev'ry feeling warm'd.

It seem'd a hallow'd spot, by heaven design'd
As a fit refuge for a weary mind,
Where freed from worldly cares and worldly foes,
In soft security it might repose.

Enraptur'd as upon this scene I gaz'd,
A sudden change my wondering view amaz'd,
As if by talismanic power deform'd,
The garden to a desert stood transform'd.

Where late the lake a stagnant pool was seen,
Its surface cover'd by the mantling green,
Some leafless shrubs of all the grove remain'd,
Whose lofty summit late the earth disdain'd.

No flowers of brightest hue, nor odours sweet,
Nor cheerful song of birds the senses greet,
But howlings of the blast whose scorching breath,
Like the fell simoom's swoop, seem'd big with death.

The heavens were of a lurid cast, as when
An earthquake threats to leave his gloomy den,
Nor sun, nor moon, nor stars, met the strain'd eye,
But baleful meteors glared athwart the sky.

A wild tornado sweeping o'er the land,
Heaved like old ocean's waves the burning sand,
When at the thunder's voice, and lightning's gleam,
Startling, I woke, and shudder'd at my dream.

Ah! how it grieves the soul to part
From those we fondly love,
Condemn'd, lone exiles of the heart,
In solitude to rove,
While clings remembrance of the past,
All that of happiness can last.

That sound so desolate, farewell,
Falls mournful on the ear,
Of joy the melancholy knell,
The echo of a tear,
It sadly antedates the doom
That waits within the oblivious tomb.

How wretched is the fate of man!
Since e'en his very joys
Prove, soon or late, of bliss the bane,
As time or chance destroys,
And pleasure's smile, and love's delight,
Must surely fade in withering blight.

Poor wanderers on life's weary way,
We pass from stage to stage,
While the frail creatures of a day,
Our reckless hearts engage,
As if eternity were giv'n
To man below, or earth were heav'n.

Yet vain we seek to still the heart,
  It bursts the chains that bind,
And burns with ardour to impart
  The flame it strives to find,
Abhorring, spite of all controul,
The dismal solitude of soul.

LINES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN IN A GARRET.

Ye monarchs of the earth proclaim
  The grandeur of your state,
Exalt your high and haughty fame,
  I envy not your fate.

A loftier place I occupy,
  I soar above ye all,
And what is more, though rais'd so high,
  Fear not ignoble fall.

But safely lodg'd, my eye surveys
  The world on ev'ry side,
And as with downward view I gaze,
  I feel no common pride,

And scarce from smiling can refrain,
  To think that I'm possest
Of that which all men strive to gain,
  And sacrifice their rest.

What's thirst of fame, but a desire
  O'er fellow men to rise,
An anxious craving to aspire
  And soar toward the skies?

For this the warrior draws his sword,
The poet wields his pen,
The miser still augments his hoard,
Ambition curses men.

I sacrifice nor ease nor joy,
My station to maintain,
Know nought of cares that peace destroy,
Nor feel suspicion's pain.

Secure I sit, and look below,
To fall were e'en to rise,
Why should my wishes higher go?
A denizen of the skies.

The earliest sun illumes my head,
My state, the stars declare it,
The cope of heav'n is o'er me spread,
High seated in my garret.

LINES

UPON HEARING A FRIEND COMPLAIN OF THE SLOWNESS OF TIME.

How slow is time! ah! say not so,
Swiftly the gliding moments flow,
And soon his hastening stream shall be
Engulph'd in vast eternity.

How slow is time! his constant race
Runs with a never failing pace,
And rapidly the periods roll,
Which bear him to his destin'd goal.

How slow is time! ah! where are fled
The countless years already sped?
With hurrying steps they journey'd fast,
The future's story is the past.

How slow is time! alas! how fleet!
He wings his way with flying feet,
The lightning's glance, the meteor's light
Are emblems of his viewless flight.

How slow is time! all things beside
May check, however swift, their tide,
E'en death himself may be delay'd,
Time's ceaseless course is never stay'd.

The lines of which I offer a translation below, were written by the French poet Gilbert, a few days before his death, which took place at the age of twenty-nine, in the hospital of the Hotel Dieu at Paris, whither he had been carried in a state of derangement, from the adjoining palace of his patron, M. de Beaumont, the Archbishop. The fate of this interesting and highly gifted young man, was most melancholy and heart-rending. His principal productions are two satires of distinguished merit, in which he lashes with unsparing severity, the French philosophers of the eighteenth century, and stigmatizes in glowing colours, the unblushing vices of the day. These drew down upon him the vengeance of those powerful writers, which together with his temperament prone to gloom and melancholy, finally reduced him to a state of mental distraction. The immediate cause of his death, was a key which he swallowed in a paroxysm of madness, and which adhering in his throat, terminated his existence after some hours of the most horrible anguish. The lines which follow, were written in one of his lucid intervals, a few days before his dissolution, and derive a melancholy interest from the circumstances under which they were produced. They have always been much admired in France, particularly the last three stanzas, which are irresistibly pathetic and touching. The translation which I offer, may be regard-

ed as a pretty fair approximation to the sentiments, though they cannot give the faintest idea of the inimitable beauties of the original.

The God of innocence hath seen
  My penitential tears,
He makes my troubled breast serene,
  And drowns my anxious fears,
He yields my suffering soul relief,
For his is every child of grief.

My cruel enemies have cried
  Exulting, "Let him die!
And perish too his name, belied!"
  But thou, Lord, from on high,
Hast like a tender father spoke,
"Fear not, their hate shall turn its stroke.

Thy dearest friends are now thy foes,
  They mock thy soul sincere;
The mercenary wretch who owes
  To thee his daily cheer,
Traffics thine injur'd image, shown
Stain'd with the blackness of his own.

But God thy plaintive accents hears,
  God hearkens to the cry
Of deep remorse, baptiz'd in tears,
  And soothes thine agony,
God, who with pardoning eye surveys
The frailty of misfortune's ways.

The voice of pity, I will wake,
  The justice sure of time,
And each foul effort shall but make
  Thine honour shine less dim,
Thine uncorrupted fame shall rise
More pure, more bright, to mortal eyes."

Oh God! who deign'st my soul redress
  With virtue's noble pride,
Thy grace my heart shall ever bless,
  In which I now confide
To guard me in the lonely gloom
Of death, and watch above my tomb.

A sad, a momentary guest,
  Life's banquet me receiv'd,
And now I leave the bitter feast,
  My transient course achiev'd,
Nor tears shall on the tomb descend
Tow'rd which my languid footsteps bend.

Farewell! ye pleasant fields, farewell!
  Sweet verdure of the grove!
Where nameless beauties secret dwell,
  Proud canopy above!
Nature with all thy wondrous store,
Farewell! I ne'er shall greet ye more.

Oh ! may those friends who now refuse
To listen to the voice
With which I pour my last adieus,
Long in your charms rejoice,
And when at last they sink with years,
Their eyes be seal'd by friendship's tears.

'Tis sweet when summer rules the sky,
And rides the scorching sun aloft,
Beneath a spreading tree to lie,
Beside a fountain murmuring soft ;

To feel the zephyr's soothing balm
Play gently o'er the burning cheek,
While nature wrapt in holiest calm,
No rude alarms the stillness break;

Reclining soft with book in hand,
To pore o'er some delightful tale,
Till bodied forth by fancy's wand,
Flit forms ideal o'er the vale ;

Or as the expanding feelings glow,
To hold bright converse with the muse,
Till numbers soft spontaneous flow,
Deck'd with imagination's hues ;

To glance in raptur'd reverie
O'er bliss enjoy'd or promis'd yet,
Survey bright scenes in prospect lie,
And present grief in hope forget;

Till, wearied with its musing task,
Soft sinks the soul in slumber's arms,
In golden dreams of bliss to bask
And revel in ideal charms.

Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria.

Dante.

What greater grief than to recall
Delights when fled and vanish'd all,
To muse o'er joys in time of woe,
O'er joys departed long ago,
Past pleasure lures the heart in vain,
And adds fresh pangs to present pain.

Hath not each day abundant share
Of ill for mortal strength to bear,
That we must add unto its lot
Vain sighs for what were best forgot,
And seek the tantalizing pow'r
Of vanish'd bliss in grief's sad hour?

When age involves our years in gloom,
Say, shall we sigh for childhood's bloom,
And aggravate our hopeless fate
With vain regrets for youth's bright state?
No! let each day alone supply
Its ample share of misery.

May the dim veil of time conceal
The bliss we can no longer feel,
And may the bitter memory sleep
Of joys for which in vain we weep;
When recollection's pow'r is grief,
Forgetfulness is best relief.

TRANSLATION

OF A SONNET OF PETRARCH.

Mid desert paths and solitary ways,
Pensive and lone, my languid steps I wend,
And my sad eyes with anxious vision bend
Where the still ground no human trace displays;
My only refuge this, against the gaze
Importunate which curious mortals send,
And in my looks of joy bereft, portend
The inward flame that on my spirit preys;
And thus the mountain and the silent vale,
The groves and streams my soul's grief understand,
Which is a hidden pain to others' eye;
But yet such rugged path, or savage dale,
Where love can come not, vainly I demand,
For converse prompt, he evermore is nigh.

SONNET.

ON THE FIELD OF MARENGO.

And is it here, on this fair quiet spot,
Where nought is heard around, nor aught is seen,
Save song of birds, and spring's delightful green,
Embattled nations met in combat hot,
To cast with human lives the awful lot,
Decisive of an empire's fate, between
Legions of maddening foes of various mien,
Where fell a hero not by victory smote?
Oh! what a lesson here may glory read,
Where earth, regardless of man's petty wrath,
Riots and fattens on his richest blood.
'Tis sickening to behold, as slow I tread,
The flowers that garnish desolation's path,
Nourish'd by mortals with their vital flood.

SONNET.

The venerable church of Sante Croce, in Florence, contains the ashes of Galileo, Machiavelli, Michel Angelo, and Alfieri.

Tomb of the mighty dead, illustrious shrine!
Where genius in the majesty of death,
Reposes solemn, sepulchred beneath,
Temple o'er ev'ry other fane divine!
Dark Santa Croce! in whose dust recline
Their mouldering relics, whose immortal wreath
Blooms on unfaded by time's withering breath,
In these proud ashes what a prize is thine!
Sure it is holy ground I tread upon,
Nor do I breathe unconsecrated air,
As rapt, I gaze on each undying name;
These monuments are fragments of the throne
Once rear'd by genius on this spot so fair,
When Florence was the seat of arts and early fame.

SONNET.

Fair Italy ! thou country of the tomb,
Deck'd with the garlands that o'erhang the grave,
Soft land of loveliness ! where nought is, save
The beauteous relics of thy faded bloom,
Soon may the day of retribution come
Destin'd to break the fetters that enslave
Those who were once the mighty and the brave,
Monarchs of earth, sons of imperial Rome.
For though a stranger on thy far fam'd shore,
A lonely wanderer from a distant strand,
Yet as I pore o'er each illustrious spoil,
And warm with rapture at thy living lore,
I feel my heart with filial glow expand,
And love thee as my own, Ausonia's matchless soil !

SONNET.

Ah! whence, oh life! the secret charm thou hast,
That mortals should to thee for ever cling?
Tho' time bears off on his untiring wing
Each day some fond illusion of the past,
And shows the future land of promise waste;
While joys departed leave a bitter sting,
Nor doth each sad to-morrow fail to bring
Some new affliction fiercer than the last:
Yet nought the fetters can unloose that bind
The soul to earth, nor weary us with life,
Though with increasing evil ever fraught;
How few when death advances, are resign'd
To leave a world with ceaseless suffering rife,
Whose rare enjoyments are so dearly bought.

FRAGMENTS

FROM AN ABANDONED POEM.

These thoughts that wander thro' Eternity.
Paradise Lost.

When the full season of the year is past
And fiercely threatening howls the wintry blast,
When the sad trees have shed their verdant dress,
And herb and flower have lost their loveliness,
When turned to stone the rills refuse to flow,
And earth is mantled in a shroud of snow,
Dark, gathering clouds deform the lowering air,
And nature seems a desert bleak and bare;
Amid the desolation of this scene,
Made gloomier by the thought of what has been,
This dreary waste, this melancholy dearth
Of every charm that cheer'd the face of earth,
What then can gladness to the soul impart,
Or soothe and animate the sinking heart?
The cheering prospect of approaching spring,
Of days which renovated joy shall bring,
Of brighter suns to gild the year's gay morn
And with rich fruits replenish plenty's horn,
When each fair flower shall beauteously expand
And breathe a fragrant odour o'er the land,
When murmuring rills through meadows green shall glide

And blooming forests crown the mountain's side,
When jocund flocks along the hills shall stray,
And nature's music usher in the day.
Thus man for refuge from his mortal fate
Flies to the prospect of a future state,
From earth's low regions lifts his eye sublime,
And looks beyond to Heaven's eternal clime;
Some happy goal where, run his toilsome race,
His weary steps shall find a resting place,
Where safely landed on some blissful shore,
Sorrow and care shall visit him no more,
But all his sufferings here below forgot,
Pleasure unmix'd with pain shall be his lot;
Where anxious fears no more shall rack his soul,
No bitter drops invade joy's ever-sparkling bowl.

* * * * * * * *

Who hath not felt at times within him rise
Some anxious, craving, heav'n-ward tending sighs,
Some high desires that fill the glowing breast
With lofty aspirations to be blest?
Who hath not felt his kindling bosom glow
With thoughts that proudly spurned at all below,
Thoughts nameless, boundless, undefin'd and high,
Glancing from time into eternity?
Gifted with godlike powers and a mind
That glows with feelings of unearthly kind,
With faculties that ever on the stretch
Still grasp at objects far beyond their reach,
With thoughts that wander busy o'er the past,
And through the future's veil their prying vision
cast;

If with his present state man's being cease,
His property in life a transient lease,
If night eternal swallow up his days,
The grave his everlasting dwelling-place,
Then of all creatures that inhabit earth,
Most cause has he to mourn his hapless birth;
Each lofty feeling of the soul a curse,
Of pining discontent the fostering nurse,
A cankering worm that ever mars his rest,
Each high desire infus'd within the breast,
Urging his restless spirit still to strive
For what no sublunary joy can give,
An ignis fatuus of the erring mind,
A vision false to tantalize the blind.
Much better would it with his station suit,
If, dull and heedless like the stupid brute,
His wishes were to sensual joys confin'd,
To pleasures gross, ignoble, unrefin'd,
And satisfied alone to eat and drink,
He ne'er aspir'd to reason or to think,
Nor ever enter'd in his ardent mind,
Visions of future bliss, celestial, undefin'd.

* * * * * * * *

With aspect shrouded in monastic veil
Mark in her cloister'd cell the virgin pale,
See clad in coarsest serge that form divine,
Those lovely limbs where matchless graces shine;
The parting robe betrays the snowy breast
Where no fond wish disturbs eternal rest,
Banish'd by calm devotion's holy frame
Each earthly feeling and each passion's flame,

Cold, rigid abstinence, remains alone,
Where late entwin'd gay pleasure's purple zone.
The hope of future bliss absorbs her mind,
For this she leaves the dwellings of mankind,
And mortifies in penitential grief
The world's amusements and its pleasures brief;
Her glowing fancy, with enraptur'd eyes,
Views scenes of heavenly joys in prospect rise,
Sees wandering in the fields of bliss above
The parted objects of her former love,
And kindling as the ecstacy prolongs,
Hears angels hymn their beatific songs.
This hope consoles the hermit in his hut,
Far from the noisy world for ever shut,
With this, the stream that murmurs at his side
Is sweeter than the vineyard's purple tide,
With this he loves his scant, abstemious board
Far more than if with costly viands stor'd,
And finds within his solitary glen
More bliss than in the busy haunts of men.
Joyous he hails the oft returning day,
While peacefully his moments glide away,
Till age at length exhausts his weary breath,
And soft he sinks into the arms of death.
The martyr fasten'd to the cruel stake
Exults in suffering for his conscience's sake,
With eye complacent views the scorching flames,
And to the last his steadfast faith proclaims.
The kindling fires that round him fiercely glow,
But show the calm that settles on his brow,

But mark the fortitude and high disdain
With which he triumphs over mortal pain;
Visions of bright reward his pangs controul,
Exulting hope supports his shrinking soul,
And glorying in such holy cause to die,
His shouts triumphant rend the lofty sky.
This hope with firmness nerv'd the Athenian's soul
When calm he drank the deadly poison'd bowl,
And high in virtue's majesty arose
Above the bitter malice of his foes.
'Twas this the soul of godlike Cato stay'd
When rushing on the self-directed blade,
He thus the Cæsar's tyrant pow'r defied,
And rather than submit with Roman courage died.

* * * * * * * * *

What state will not this heavenly prospect cheer?
It soothes each pang, relieves each anxious fear,
It wipes the tear from pale affliction's eye,
And softens to a smile the rising sigh,
Blunts the sharp point of fierce misfortune's dart
And heals the wounds which canker in the heart,
In smiles it robes e'en death's terrific face
And turns each horrid feature to a grace,
Its brightening hopes life's closing scene illume,
And throw a brilliant halo round the tomb.

* * * * * * * * *

O grant me but this hope, celestial pow'r!
To light the darkness of my dying hour,
Grant but a glimpse of heavenly bliss to cheer,
And chace away each cruel, lingering fear,

With dissolution's pangs I'll firmly strive,
Nor breathe one trembling, anxious pray'r to live,
My soul with joy shall hail the approach of death,
And sounds of rapture seal my parting breath.

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